



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Reduce exposure to mosquitoes this summer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Escambia County Health Department established a mosquito control program in 2008 that includes surveillance activities such as mosquito trapping and identification and sentinel chicken testing surveillance. These activities monitor for mosquito-borne diseases and keep track of mosquito populations.

Serum samples taken each week from six sentinel chicken flocks are tested for the presence of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) virus, West Nile virus (WNV) and St. Louis Encephalitis (SLE) virus. The Escambia County Health Department also provides free larvicide to the public for application in low-lying areas that retain water, ornamental ponds, and other areas of poorly draining shallow water.

"Summer will soon be in full swing and people will be enjoying the great outdoors, and in our fun we sometimes overlook the need to reduce our exposure to mosquitoes," said Steve Mitchell, environmental supervisor. "Keep your mosquito repellent handy and limit your outdoor time during the peak mosquito feeding of early morning and late afternoon."

Mosquitoes that can spread EEE, WNV and SLE are commonly found in urban, suburban and rural communities. They breed in a matter of a few days in storm drains, ditches, waste lagoons and in artificial containers around the home and are not limited to swamp areas. Anything that holds water for more than three days can be raising mosquitoes.

Now is the time to clean up around your home to eliminate mosquito breeding sites. Although all mosquitoes cannot be eliminated, our families' exposure can be limited.

1. Dispose of all rubbish such as cans, bottles and anything that will hold water.
2. Turn over items stored outside such as wheelbarrows, children's wading pools, and buckets.
3. Keep hedges and grass trimmed and to a minimum because mosquitoes use these shady places to hide during the heat of the day.

In order to have a safer and more enjoyable summer, reduce mosquito breeding areas, use larvicide on problem areas, reduce your exposure during peak mosquito activity times, and use mosquito repellents.

For more information regarding the Escambia County Health Department mosquito control program contact:

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